

Easter in ukraine



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Easter (in Ukrainian: ' Velykden' or ' Pasha') is the most important holiday of the year in Ukraine. It's celebrated on each first week after vernal equinox and full moon. Preparation for Easter starts seven weeks ahead of time with the advent of Lent. Believers don't eat meat and any animal products. Palm Sunday, the week before Easter, is known in Ukraine as Willow Sunday.

People bring home willow branches which have been blessed in church and beat this willow of children that were not ill and were healthy.

The week is dedicated to preparing for Easter. The Thursday before Easter is called Clean Thursday. During this time an effort is made to finish all field work before Thursday, since from Thursday on work is forbidden. Pure Thursday is connected with ritual of clarification by water. According to Ukrainian tradition one should bathe before sunrise on this day to be healthy all year. The house must be clean too. Good Friday is the day that the women of the family bake " pasha", Ukrainian Easter bread.

On Saturday children dye Easter eggs to add to the Easter basket which will be blessed in church. It also includes pysanka, salt, pasha, sausage, ham and most of the people also put in basket red sweet wine. In the evening people go to church for the Easter mass, which lasts all night. After that people go home to celebrate Easter with their families. If they meet other people on the way they say: " Christ is risen! " and these people should reply " Risen indeed". All the people exchange Easter greetings and give each other painted eggs.

On Easter day kids play their favorite Easter game: knocking the eggs. If you knock somebody's egg and your egg is not broken than you are the winner.

The Easter season in Ukraine comes to an end with the cult of the dead is observed. The dead are remembered during the whole week after Easter, especially on the first Monday following Easter Sunday. People gather in the cemeteries, bringing with them some food, candies and wine, which they consume, leaving the rest at the graves.